

OCT 13 1998

Dr. J. J. Theron
Directorate of Animal Health
Private Bag X138
Pretoria 0001, South Africa

DEF 307

Dear Dr. Theron:

This is in reference to your request that the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, recognize the Republic of South Africa as free of scrapie.

The information you submitted was very helpful in understanding the situation in South Africa with respect to scrapie. However, to complete our evaluation, we would appreciate clarification of the following:

1. You stated that the reference laboratory in South Africa examines approximately 900 small stock submissions per year, but that not all of these submissions include brain material. We understand that you are in the process of extracting more exact data regarding these submissions, but is it possible at this time to provide more information on submissions from small stock that were presented with signs of a neurologic disorder? Specifically, we are interested in knowing the number of such submissions, including the rabies-negative samples, examined since 1994.
2. You stated that meat and bone meal is imported from Argentina, Australia, New Zealand, Namibia, Botswana, and Zimbabwe. We assume that these are the only countries from which this material was imported during the past five years. Is this correct?
3. Please describe the protocol followed in the examination of brains for evidence of scrapie, including the areas or regions of the brain examined.

Thank you for your cooperation and patience in this matter.

Sincerely,

/s/ Joan M. Arnoldi
Associate Administrator

Joan M. Arnoldi
Associate Administrator